

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE

**Electronic Filing
of
RUS Forms 7, 12, and 479**

V1.1

GETTING STARTED GUIDE

April 4, 2003

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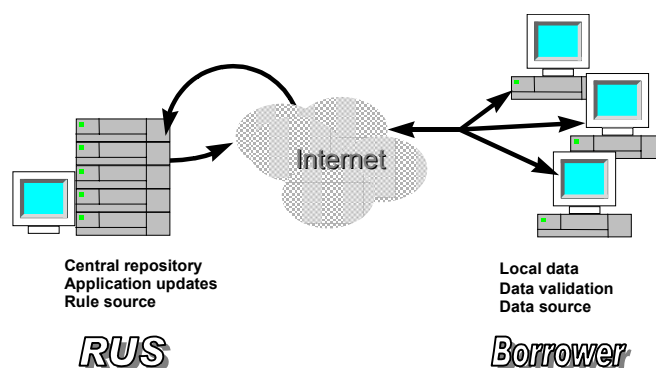
1 INTRODUCTION

The RUS Data Collection System (DCS) Software is an automated system that manages the RUS forms filing requirements. This system allows data entry of information that usually was entered on paper forms and/or earlier software systems. The data is stored in a database with all the associated advantages (e.g., data integrity checks, ease of retrieval). The system is designed to use the Internet for data exchange between RUS and its borrowers. Additionally, the DCS can automatically update itself, via the Internet, to correct inaccuracies or provide additional enhancements as requested by users.

2 SYSTEM DESCRIPTION AND OPERATIONS OVERVIEW

Technology/Architecture:

- Software Environment: Windows 95/98/NT/2000 (minimum 16MB RAM, 10MB hard disk space), Internet Explorer (v4 or later), or Netscape (v4 or later) browser (for initial installation only)
- System Installation: Download/install via the Internet
- Software Application: Database system, object-oriented design/code, multi-user access, data validation, Internet-enabled, automatic updates, highly data-driven
- DCS high-level design



- Software is initially retrieved from RUS via the Internet and installed on the local borrower's machine.
- After installation, the software handles communications over the Internet (i.e., Web browsers are not needed to enter data or run the system).
- An Internet connection is needed for the initial installation and when submitting a filing. The borrower computers do *not* need to be constantly connected to the

Internet. However, in order to receive automatic updates, an Internet connection *is* required. Each time the system is run, it checks for an Internet connection, and if one is available, it will check for automatic updates.

- RUS maintains a database of borrower data on their server, which acts as the repository for all data from all borrowers. This data can be downloaded to the borrower site using the program. This allows borrowers to easily look back at previous data as well as simplify copying forward data that has not changed.
- Other processes on the RUS computers perform functions such as automatic email notification of filing receipt, verifying filing data (e.g., consistency and data error checks), and uploading filings to the central repository.

3 HOW TO FIND THE RUS WEB SITE

The RUS web site is at <http://dcs.usda.gov>.

4 HOW TO FIND THE DCS PROGRAMS

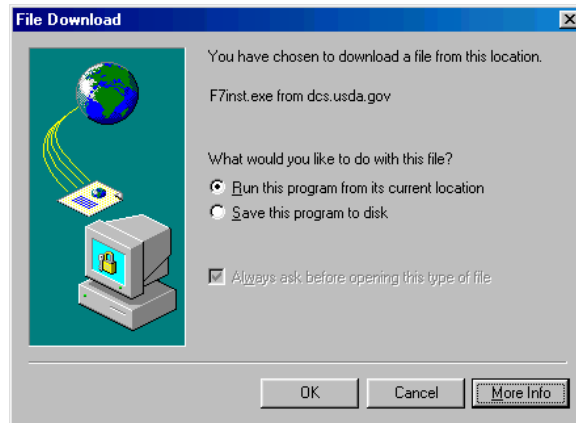
From the RUS web site, click on the link for the appropriate Form (i.e., Form 7 Page, Form 12 Page, or Form 479 Page). The link to the program (i.e., Form 7 DCS, Form 12 DCS, or Form 479 DCS) will be in a table labeled: *Data Collection System Program*, under the column labeled: *Download*.

5 HOW TO DOWNLOAD/INSTALL THE PROGRAM

The RUS DCS software is downloaded from the RUS Server at <http://dcs.usda.gov> via the Internet. The downloaded file is an installation file. It is used to install the program on your workstation. Once the software is installed at your site, the installation file is no longer needed and can be deleted.

To download the RUS DCS software via the Internet:

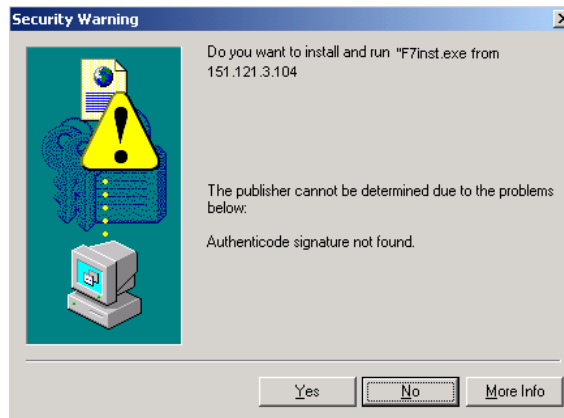
- Click on the Form # DCS (substitute 7, 12, or 479 for # depending on which form you need) link to obtain the software installation file. The following screen will appear.



- You may choose to “Run this program from its current location”, or “Save this program to disk” and then install from your hard drive. If operating from a slow modem, it is recommended to “Save this program to disk” and then install. The downloaded installation file can be used to make multiple installations. This is the largest file you will have to transfer across the Internet. We estimate that it will take approximately 25 to 30 minutes to download this file using a 56K modem.

TO: “Run this program from its current location”

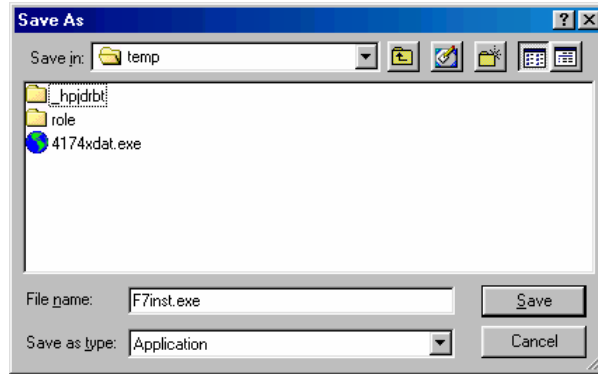
- Select “Run this program from its current location”. Click “OK” and the installation will begin.
- The following screen may appear. Click “Yes” to continue.



- An additional screen may appear asking you to verify that you wish to install the application. If it does, click “Yes” to continue.

TO: “Save this program to disk”

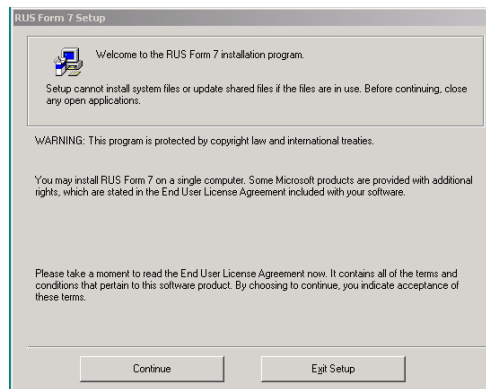
- Select “Save this program to disk”. Click “OK”. The following screen will appear.



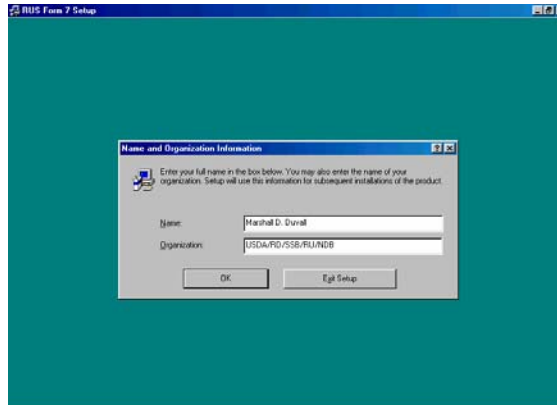
- Select a folder to save the program to. Click “Save”. After the download is complete, click “Close”.
- Locate the file with Windows Explorer, place your cursor on the file name, and double-click. This will start the installation process.

Installation Process

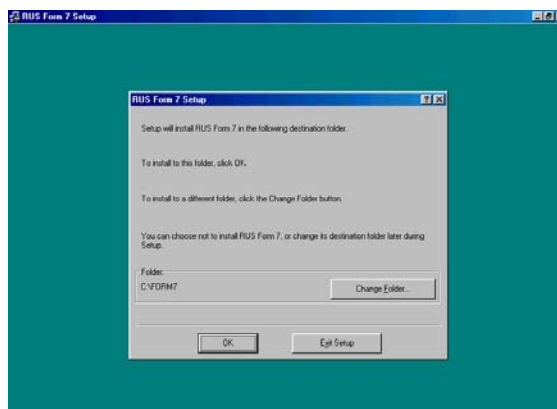
- The next screen is a normal part of the Microsoft Software Installation. There is no need to worry about the licensing agreement; RUS is authorized to distribute this software free of charge. Click “Continue”.



- The next screen is also a normal part of the Microsoft Software Installation. Enter or verify your Name and Organization Information. Click “OK”.

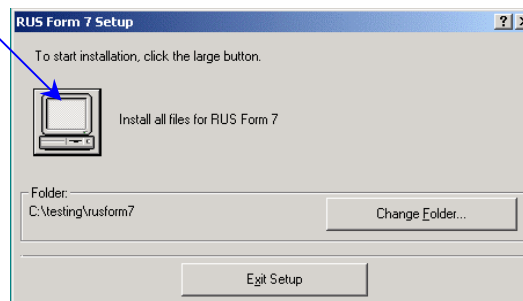


- On the next screen, confirm your Name and Organization Information. Click “OK”.
- The installation program will want to place the application in the \Form# folder on your C: drive. Please do not change the folder name or location. It is easier for us to help you if you have a standard installation. Just click “OK”. If you change the default location do not include any spaces in the new folder name. If you change the default location and the folder does not exist, the installation program will ask if you want to create it.



- The next screen pictures a computer icon. Click on it to start the installation.

Click here to start installation.



- The installation process will create a program group called RUS Applications. Click “Continue”. When the installation finishes, you will get a pop-up screen notification stating

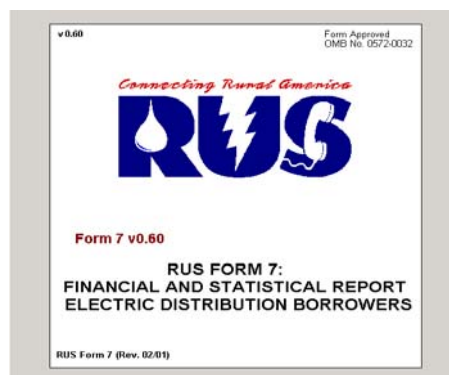
‘RUS Form # Setup was completed successfully.’ Click “OK”. The installation will instruct you to restart your computer. This is necessary for proper registration of certain components of the software.

- Once the software is installed, it will appear in your workstation “Start Menu” under a Program Group called RUS Applications. To start the program, click on Form #.

6 INITIAL OPERATION AND SETUP OF FORM DATABASE

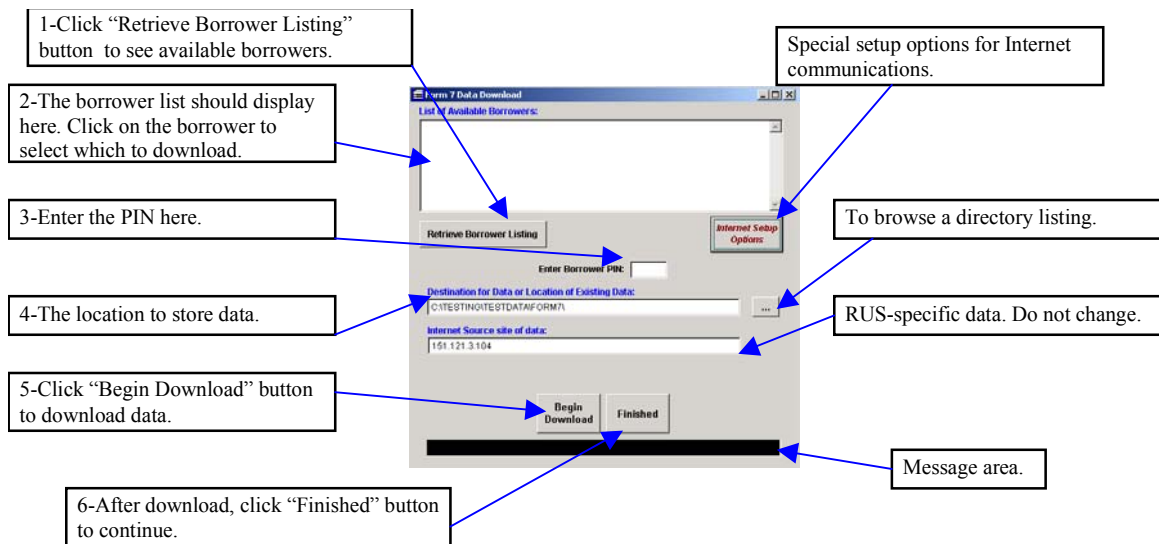
During this process you tell the program where to store the form database, create the database, and download historical data. All initial users need to perform these steps even if you do not have historical data in order to create the database. Non-initial users at the same site should see Chapter 7. Please note that this process downloads all historical data and overwrites any existing database.

When the program is run, a pop-up screen appears similar to the following.



The above screen may be slightly different depending on which DCS is being used (i.e., Form 7, Form 12, or Form 479) and version number.

The first time the program is used, the following screen appears automatically.



The following are basic steps that correspond to the screen above:

1. When the above screen appears, the list will be blank. Click the "Retrieve Borrower Listing" button and a borrower list should appear after a few seconds. This list contains the available borrowers for the applicable DCS.
2. To select a borrower's data to download, click on the name in the list. If the name does not appear, please contact RUS. Only one borrower's data can be downloaded at a time.
3. Enter the PIN number assigned to the borrower whose data is to be downloaded. RUS maintains the list of PINS and the PIN will be distributed separately for security reasons. If the PIN is unknown, please contact RUS.
4. This is the location (i.e., drive and directory/folder) where the data will reside.

NOTE: If multiple users are intended to access and edit the data, this location should be placed on a network drive. This is a location where all users can access the data. Contact your local network support if necessary to determine where this should be. If the data has already been downloaded, you can "point" to that data by simply entering the location here.

5. Next, click the "Begin Download" button. With a high-speed connection, this may take only 30 seconds. A 56K modem connection may take as much as 10 minutes. After about 20 to 30 seconds, a pop-up window will display the number of bytes being transferred. Messages will appear in the message area during the download. A final message will appear in a window informing you of the completion of the download. Click "OK".

If there are other borrowers to download, simply start back at Step 2 above. NOTE: If several borrowers are to be downloaded, it is highly recommended that they be kept in

the same database (that is, download them all to the exact same database location specified in Step 4 above).

6. When you are finished downloading borrowers, click the “Finished” button and the program will proceed to the data entry portion of the system.

7 SETUP WHEN YOU ARE NOT THE FIRST USER AT YOUR SITE TO INSTALL THE PROGRAM

If you are not the first user to install the software at your site and the first user has already downloaded the data to a network drive you do not need to download the data again. All you need to do is point your program to the directory on the network where the files are saved. This is done using the location to store data block on the data download screen described in Chapter 6.

NOTE: Once the data is downloaded, other users *should not* download the data again.

8 HOW TO GET STARTED ON DATA ENTRY FOR THIS YEAR (OR FOR THE FIRST TIME)

The first screen encountered when running the program is called the ‘Select Form Part for Input’ screen. This screen (below) allows you to pick which part of the form you wish to edit.

The screenshot shows the 'Select Form Part for Input' dialog box. Annotations with arrows point to various elements:

- Currently selected Borrower.** points to the 'Select Borrower/Year/Period:' dropdown menu.
- RUS borrower designation.** points to the 'MS0029' dropdown menu.
- Year and period of Form.** points to the '1999' and '12' dropdown menus.
- Enter Sequence number of Form Part.** points to the 'Enter Sequence #' text box.
- List of Form Parts available.** points to the list of form parts.
- Click to invoke data entry screen of selected Form Part.** points to the 'Select' button.

Title of Part	Sequence
Identification and Certification	1
Part A. Statement of Operations	2
Part B. Data on Transmission and Distribution Plant	3
Part C. Balance Sheet	4
Part D. Notes to Financial Statements	5
Part E. Changes in Utility Plant	6
Part F. Materials and Supplies	7
Part G. Service Interruptions	8
Part H. Employee-Hour and Payroll Statistics	9
Part I. Patronage Capital	10
Part J. Due From Consumers for Electric Service	11

Notice the four top items are “drop-down” boxes. Click on the black, down arrow to see and select other available options. Select the appropriate borrower, year, and period.

Enter the Sequence number of the desired Part or select the Part from the list and then click the “Select” button and the corresponding data entry screen (below) will appear.

Please refer to the on-line help (press the F1 key) for additional instructions in navigating data entry screens.

9 HOW TO FIND THE ON-LINE HELP AND NAVIGATE IN THE ON-LINE HELP

The RUS DCS software contains extensive documentation that explains its operation. You can either view this help on the screen (press F1 key or click on the Help Menu at the top of the screen) or print the instructions to read later.

10 HOW TO GET RUS FILING ASSISTANCE

Filing assistance is available for each Form. Assistance is available for using the program (Program Assistance) and for completing the form (Form Assistance). The table below provides a complete listing of the contact points for the three forms. Please be careful to contact the appropriate individual for the problem that you are having.

Form 7 Filing Assistance	
Program Assistance	Form Assistance
<p>Andy Schatz (202) 720-1392 aschatz@rus.usda.gov</p> <p>Ken Baldwin (703) 605-4379 kbaldwin@rdmail.rural.usda.gov</p>	<p>Northern Region Brian Jenkins (202) 720-1422 bjenkins@rus.usda.gov</p>
	<p>Southern Region Nivin Elgohary (202) 720-1932 nelgohar@rus.usda.gov</p>

Form 12 Filing Assistance		
Borrower Type	Program Assistance	Form Assistance
Power Supply	John Sanders (202) 690-2970 jsanders@rus.usda.gov Dan Herche (703) 605-4305 dherche@rdmail.rural.usda.gov	Doris Nolte (202) 720-1383 dnolte@rus.usda.gov
Distribution		Northern Region Brian Jenkins (202) 720-1422 bjenkins@rus.usda.gov
		Southern Region Nivin Elgohary (202) 720-1932 nelgohar@rus.usda.gov

Form 479 Filing Assistance	
Program Assistance	Form Assistance
Richard Anderson (202) 720-8818 randerso@rus.usda.gov Joe Bryant (703) 605-4321 jbryant@rdmail.rural.usda.gov	Eastern Wanda Lloyd (202) 720-2281 wlloyd@rus.usda.gov
	Southwest Roland Woodfolk (202) 720-0803 rwoodfol@rus.usda.gov
	Northwest Stanley Wastowicz (202) 720-0733 swastowi@rus.usda.gov

11 HOW TO SUBMIT THE FORM TO RUS

From the menu choose Options/Admin Options/Create Submission. You will need to have your PIN. Once you have input your PIN and the Filing Window comes up you need to input your name, your telephone number and your e-mail address. The DCS sends an e-mail to the address provided here to confirm your submission. If you do not get this e-mail, RUS did not get your submission.

The notes on this screen should be used to inform RUS of any changes that were made to your submission if you resubmit.